

REMARKS

Examiner H. Vu is thanked for the thorough examination and search of the subject Patent Application. Claims 21 and 26 have been amended.

The Examiner is thanked for allowing claims 32-41.

Claim 26 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner for clarity.

All Claims are believed to be in condition for Allowance, and that is so requested.

Reconsideration of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 of Claims 21-30 as being anticipated by Edelstein et al is requested in view of amended Claim 21 and in accordance with the following remarks.

Claim 21 has been amended to claim the copper sulfide directly contacting the stack dielectric layer as shown in Figs. 5 and 6 and as described on page 8 of the Specification. It is discussed on page 2 and page 10 of the Specification that a diffusion barrier layer, such as layer 70 or 72 of Edelstein et al (Fig. 2, col. 6, line 65 – col. 7, line 2), is optional in the process of Applicants' invention. Edelstein's seed layers 76 and 78, which may be copper sulfide, are formed on the barrier layers and not directly contacting the dielectric layers. Edelstein discusses various functions of the seed layers (col. 7, lines 21-22 and 52-63). This has nothing to do with Applicants' invention of using copper sulfide to prevent copper diffusion from a lower

interconnect 12 into the dielectric sidewalls of the upper interconnect opening 30 (see Fig. 3A).

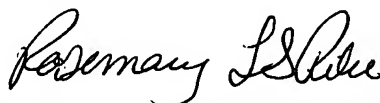
There is no teaching or suggestion in Edelstein that the barrier layer can be eliminated.

Reconsideration of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 of Claims 21-30 as being anticipated by Edelstein et al is requested in view of amended Claim 21 and in accordance with the remarks above.

Allowance of all Claims is requested.

It is requested that should Examiner Vu not find that the Claims are now Allowable that the Examiner call the undersigned at 765 4530866 to overcome any problems preventing allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rosemary L. S. Pike".

Rosemary L. S. Pike. Reg # 39,332